

La Jolla

AREA OF SPECIAL BIOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

HIGH LEVEL OF HIGH THREAT DISCHARGE

Area of Special Biological Significance = Zero Pollution Discharge

In the 1970s, to preserve biologically unique and sensitive marine ecosystems for future generations, California designated 34 regions along the coast as Areas of Special Biological Significance (ASBS). These areas support an unusual variety of aquatic life, and are important building blocks for a sustainable, resilient coastal environment and economy. Although the State Water Board's Ocean Plan prohibits all waste discharges into these areas, pollution continues to damage these important habitats.

With YOUR help, California Coastkeeper Alliance is working to ensure important marine ecosystems are protected from pollution.



This ASBS nestles against famed and popular La Jolla Shores, which borders the Scripps Institution of Oceanography campus and Kellogg Park to the north, and the La Jolla Underwater Park Ecological Reserve to the south.

La Jolla skirts close to two miles of shoreline next to the city of San Diego and includes approximately 450 acres of ocean habitat. This stretch of beach and water hosts a diverse cast of characters that enjoy unique habits. Sanderlings run along the shore on their tiny bird legs constantly retreating from waves while digging for their favorite crustaceans in the sand. Beneath the waves shovelnose guitarfish, treefish and rock wrasses coast above bat rays, mudflat octopi and endangered abalone. The ASBS teems with activity every summer when leopard sharks congregate here to breed. This is a truly special event that draws thousands of visitors each year.



Found on the Pacific Coast, these leopard sharks spawn annually in the shallow water at La Jolla Shores. They are distinctively marked with dark brown spots on a silvery gray background that resemble a leopard print.

Pollution

The State Water Board has determined that despite protection under California law, the La Jolla ASBS is contaminated with lead, copper, indicator bacteria and pathogens from stormwater runoff, urban runoff and parking lot runoff. These contaminants threaten water quality and can harm fish and wildlife.

One Threat and Solution: Stormwater Runoff

One pollution source that particularly threatens the La Jolla ASBS is polluted stormwater. Rainwater, irrigation systems and other water sources flow over streets and yards, picking up pollutants and dumping them into storm drains that flow to local waterways. Stormwater carries trash, oil, pesticides and other pollutants into natural waterways, potentially poisoning aquatic plants and animals, particularly in sensitive marine ecosystems like ASBSs.

The City of San Diego can reduce stormwater runoff by incorporating Low Impact Development (LID) techniques into constructed surfaces such as rooftops, streetscapes, parking lots, sidewalks, and medians. These design elements work with nature to filter polluted stormwater. For example, parking lots and streetscapes can be constructed to funnel stormwater into landscaped elements called bio-swales that capture and filter rainwater before reaching local waterways. Stormwater filtration devices can also be inserted into storm drains for added protection.

Learn More

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/ocean/asbs_map.shtml

<http://www.cacoastkeeper.org/programs/clean-abundant/stormwater-runoff>

<http://www.sdcoastkeeper.org/content/programs/asbs/overview.htm>

Pollution Threats At A Glance

- **Number of High Threat Discharges:** 184
- **State Board Identified Contaminants:** Lead, Copper, Indicator Bacteria and Pathogens
- **Pollution Sources:** Stormwater runoff, urban runoff and parking lot runoff